

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as set forth below without prejudice to Applicant filing one or more continuation applications with respect to the rejected claims.

1. (Currently Amended) A packaging arrangement for a coil of fiberoptic cable which includes a plurality of individual coil loops, comprising:

a. an outer packaging tray, and

b. a fiberoptic coil carrier removably inserted into the outer packaging tray for shipment or storage, and including a plurality of retainers defining a series of parallel recesses, each of the retainers holding a respective one of the coil loops in the recess defined by the retainer, wherein the carrier provides increased ease of handling of the fiberoptic coil by engaging the fiberoptic cable at a series of separate locations along the cable, such that a selected coil loop of the fiberoptic cable can be removed from the carrier while remaining coils loops of the fiberoptic cable remain secured to the carrier;

wherein the outer packaging tray comprises a rectangular tray which is thermoformed from plastic, the tray has a bottom surface, sidewalls, and a flange at a top of and extending around the sidewalls, and the bottom surface having is generally flat ~~with shaped relief~~ areas defining one or more depressions to receive the fiberoptic coil carrier, and

wherein the relief areas accommodate larger components of the fiberoptic cable such as a connector handle, and also provide sufficient room and clearance to allow fingers to grasp and remove the carrier, and wherein the carrier and fiberoptic coils are supported by intermediate-height plateau surfaces, with the relief areas being positioned below the plateau surfaces.

2. (Previously amended) The packaging arrangement of claim 1, wherein the carrier also defines a connector end retainer for retaining a connector end of the fiberoptic cable, and a treatment end retainer for retaining a treatment end of the fiberoptic cable.

3. (Previously Amended) The packaging arrangement of claim 1, wherein the outer packaging tray is sealed with a top closure, wherein the closure-sealed tray provides for sterilization of the carrier and fiberoptic coil in the outer packaging tray.

4. (Cancelled).

5. (Cancelled).

6. (Original) The packaging arrangement of claim 1, wherein the carrier includes an attachment means for attaching the carrier to a support, such that a surgeon can position the carrier conveniently to require a minimum of handling.

7. (Original) The packaging arrangement of claim 6, wherein the attachment means comprises a spring clip.

8. (Original) The packaging arrangement of claim 6, wherein the attachment means comprises an adhesive area.

9. (Cancelled).

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Currently Amended) The packaging arrangement of claim 1, wherein a first_recess defines a tip receiver/protector, and a second recess defines a connector handle receiver/protector.

13. (Cancelled).

14. (Cancelled).

15. (Currently amended) The packaging arrangement of claim 14, wherein raised studs rise above the plateau surfaces to maintain the carrier and fiberoptic coil in position within

~~the tray, and also provide support for a top closure lid which is sealed to a flange extending around the upper perimeter of the sidewalls.~~

16. (Original) The packaging arrangement of claim 15, wherein at least one flange corner is recessed to provide an unsealed corner piece of the top closure lid which is suitable for grasping to pry the lid away from the tray.

17. (Currently Amended) The packaging arrangement of claim 15, wherein the carrier is ~~generally flat, and is~~ thermoformed from plastic, and the carrier has an exterior profile and shape to fit within the sidewalls and studs and on the plateau surfaces of the tray.

18. (Previously Amended) The packaging arrangement of claim 1, wherein the carrier has an I shape.

19. (Previously Amended) The packaging arrangement of claim 1, wherein the carrier has a Y shape.

20. (Cancelled)

21. (Cancelled).

22. (Cancelled)

23. (Currently Amended) A method of packaging a coil of fiberoptic cable which includes a plurality of individual coil loops, comprising:

a. mounting the fiberoptic coil on a fiberoptic coil carrier, said carrier including a plurality of retainers defining a series of parallel recesses, each of the retainers holding a respective one of the coil loops in the recess defined by the retainer, wherein the carrier engages the fiberoptic cable at a series of separate locations along the cable, such that a selected coil loop of the fiberoptic cable can be removed from the carrier while remaining coil loops of the fiberoptic cable remain secured to the carrier;

b. packaging the fiberoptic coil carrier with the fiberoptic coil mounted thereon in a rectangular outer packaging tray which has a bottom surface, sidewalls, and a top flange extending around the sidewalls, wherein the bottom surface is generally flat with comprises shaped relief areas defining one or more depressions to receive and support the fiberoptic coil carrier, and

c. supporting the carrier and fiberoptic coil on intermediate-height plateau surfaces positioned above the relief areas.

24. (Original) The method of claim 23, further including securing a connector end of the fiberoptic cable to the carrier with a connector end retainer on the carrier, and securing a

treatment end of the fiberoptic cable to the carrier with a treatment end retainer on the carrier.

25. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 23, further including sealing the outer packaging tray with a top closure, and sterilizing the carrier and fiberoptic coil in the closure-sealed outer packaging tray.

26. (Cancelled)

27. (Original) The method of claim 23, including securing the fiberoptic coil to the carrier with a plurality of individual coil loop retainers which are molded in the carrier, each of which retains and secures a single coil loop of the fiberoptic coil, which allows each individual coil loop to be individually released from the carrier.

28. (Cancelled)

29. (Cancelled) .

30. (Original) The method of claim 27, including securing a treatment end of the fiberoptic cable in a first molded recess in the carrier defining a treatment end receiver/protector, and securing a connector end of the fiberoptic cable in a second recess in the carrier defining a connector end receiver/protector.

31. (Cancelled).

32. (Canceled)

33. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 23 32, including maintaining the carrier and fiberoptic coil in position with the tray by raised studs which rise above the plateau surfaces.

34. (Currently amended) The method of claim 23 34, including sealing a top closure lid to the top flange.

35. (New) A packaging arrangement for a coil of fiberoptic cable which includes a plurality of individual coil loops, comprising:

an outer packaging tray; and

a carrier removably insertable into the outer packaging tray, the carrier comprising a plurality of retainers for engaging the fiberoptic cable at a series of separate locations along the cable, such that a selected coil loop of the fiberoptic cable can be removed from the carrier while remaining coils loops of the fiberoptic cable remain secured to the carrier;

wherein the outer tray comprises a bottom surface and sidewalls, the bottom surface comprising relief areas; wherein the relief areas provide sufficient room and clearance to allow fingers to grasp and remove the carrier from the outer packaging tray.

36. (New) The packaging arrangement of Claim 35 wherein the carrier and fiberoptic coils are supported by intermediate-height plateau surfaces, with the relief areas being positioned below the plateau surfaces.

37. (New) The packaging arrangement of claim 35, wherein the carrier also defines a connector end retainer for retaining a connector end of the fiberoptic cable, and a treatment end retainer for retaining a treatment end of the fiberoptic cable.

38. (New) The packaging arrangement of claim 35, wherein the outer packaging tray is sealed with a top closure, wherein the closure-sealed tray provides for sterilization of the carrier and fiberoptic coil in the outer packaging tray.